

1 1. A method of migrating from configuration m of a system to a configuration $m+1$
2 thereof, the system's configuration being defined by first configuration tables in a
3 database and
4 the method comprising the steps performed by the system of:
5 making second configuration tables that define configuration $m+1$;
6 making a determination whether the first configuration tables still define
7 configuration m ; and
8 if the first configuration tables still define configuration m , using the second
9 configuration tables to modify the first configuration tables such that the first
10 configuration tables define configuration $m+1$.

1 2. The method set forth in claim 1 further comprising the step of:
2 making a snapshot of the first configuration tables prior to making the second
3 configuration tables; and
4 in the step of making a determination, the snapshot is used to make the
5 determination.

1 3. The method set forth in claim 2 wherein:
2 the snapshot is compared with the first configuration tables.

1 4. The method set forth in claim 1 wherein
2 the step of making second configuration tables comprises the steps of:
3 making a copy of the first configuration tables; and
4 modifying the copy.

1 5. The method set forth in claim 4 further comprising the step of:
2 making a snapshot of the first configuration tables when the copy is made; and
3 in the step of making a determination, the snapshot is used to make the
4 determination.

- 1 6. The method set forth in claim 5 wherein:
2 in the step of making a determination, the snapshot is compared with the first
3 configuration tables.
- 1 7. The method set forth in claim 4 wherein:
2 the step of making a copy of the first configuration tables is part of a step of
3 copying the database; and
4 the method further includes the step of testing the copied database with
5 configuration $m+1$.
- 1 8. The method set forth in claim 4 wherein
2 the system performs the method under control of a user; and
3 the method further comprises the step of:
4 having any other user log off before the step of making a copy of the first
5 configuration tables.
- 1 9. The method set forth in claim 8 further comprising the step of:
2 also having any other user log off before the step of making a determination.
- 1 10. The method set forth in claim 1 wherein
2 the system performs the method under control of a user and
3 the method further comprises the steps performed when the comparison indicates
4 that the first configuration tables no longer define configuration m of:
5 notifying the user that the first configuration tables no longer define configuration
6 m ; and
7 if the user so indicates, overwriting the first configuration tables with the second
8 configuration tables.
- 1 11. The method set forth in claim 1 wherein:
2 in the step of using the second configuration tables to modify the first
3 configuration tables, the first configuration tables are modified record-by-record.

1 12. The method set forth in claim 11 wherein
2 the system performs the method under control of a user and
3 the method further comprises the steps performed when the comparison indicates
4 that the first configuration tables no longer define configuration *m* of:
5 notifying the user that the first configuration tables no longer define configuration
6 *m*; and
7 if the user so indicates, overwriting the first configuration tables with the second
8 configuration tables.

1 13. The method set forth in claim 1 further comprising the step of:
2 getting an approval by a user of the system for the migration.

1 14. The method set forth in claim 13 wherein:
2 the step of getting the approval is performed prior to the step of making a
3 determination.

1 15. The method of claim 14 wherein:
2 the step of getting the approval is performed immediately prior to the step of
3 making a determination.

1 16. The method set forth in claim 1 wherein
2 the system performs the method under control of a user; and
3 the method further comprises the step of:
4 having any other user log off before the step of making a determination.

1 17. The method set forth in claim 1 wherein:
2 the database further includes a configuration change tracking table; and
3 in the step of using the second configuration tables to modify the first
4 configuration tables, the modifications to the first configuration tables are recorded in the
5 configuration change tracking table.

1 18. The method set forth in claim 17 wherein:

2 the modifications are recorded in the configuration change table together with an
3 indication that they were made during a migration from one configuration to another.

1 19. Apparatus employed in a system having a processor and a database which includes
2 first configuration tables that define a configuration m of the system to migrate the
3 system to a configuration $m+1$ thereof,

4 the apparatus comprising:

5 a copy of the first configuration tables; and

6 a snapshot table which can be used by the processor to detect whether the first
7 configuration tables still define configuration m ,

8 the processor operating under control of a user of the system to modify the copy of the
9 first configuration tables to produce second configuration tables that define configuration
10 $m+1$, compare the first configuration tables with the snapshot table to determine whether
11 the first configuration tables still define configuration m , and if the first configuration
12 tables do so, use the second configuration tables to modify the first configuration tables
13 so that the first configuration tables define configuration $m+1$.

1 20. The apparatus set forth in claim 19 wherein

2 when the first configuration tables no longer define configuration m , the processor
3 operates to notify the user thereof and to respond to an indication from the user to so do
4 by overwriting the first configuration tables with the second configuration tables.

1 21. The apparatus set forth in claim 19 further comprising:

2 a copy of the database, the copied database including the copy of the first
3 configuration tables,

4 the processor further operating under control of the user to test configuration $m+1$
5 using the second configuration tables and the copied database.

1 22. The apparatus set forth in claim 19 wherein:

2 the processor operates under control of the user to make the snapshot table when
3 the copy of the first configuration tables is made.

1 **23.** The apparatus set forth in claim 19 wherein:

2 the processor operates under control of the user to log any other users of the
3 database off before making the copy of the first configuration tables and also before
4 comparing the first configuration tables with the snapshot table.

1 **24.** The apparatus set forth in claim 19 further comprising:

2 a signoff table in the database which indicates one or more other users whose
3 approval is required before the configuration m can be migrated to the configuration $m+1$;
4 and

5 the processor operates under control of the user to obtain approval from each of
6 the other users before using the second configuration tables to modify the first
7 configuration tables.

1 **25.** The apparatus set forth in claim 19 further comprising:

2 a configuration change tracking table in the database; and
3 the processor further recording the modifications to the first configuration tables
4 in the configuration change tracking table.

1 **26.** A data storage device, characterized in that:

2 the data storage device contains code which when executed by a processor performs a
3 method of migrating from configuration m of a system to a configuration $m+1$ thereof, the
4 system's configuration being defined by first configuration tables in a database and
5 the method comprising the steps of:

6 making second configuration tables that define configuration $m+1$;

7 making a determination whether the first configuration tables still define configuration

8 m ; and

9 if the first configuration tables still define configuration m , using the second
10 configuration tables to modify the first configuration tables such that the first configuration
11 tables define configuration $m+1$.